

Address:	1 & 2 Hillview Makepeace Avenue London N6 6EU		
Application Number:	2006/4833/P	Officer: Miss Kiran Chauhan	
Ward:	Highgate		
Date Received: 23/10/2006 Proposal: Partial demolition of ground and first floors of dwellinghouses and the erection of new ground and first floors to No.1 and No.2 Hill View (Class C3). Drawing Numbers: Site Location Plan 191/PA501 Rev A; PA540; Drawing No. 191/PA502 Rev A; 191/PA503 Rev A; 191/PA503 Rev A; 191/PA504 Rev A; 191/PA505 Rev A; 191/PA506 Rev A; 191/PA507 Rev A; 191/PA508 Rev A; 191/PA509 Rev A; 191/PA510 Rev A; 191/PA511 Rev B; 191/PA512 Rev C; 191/PA513 Rev D; 191/PA514 Rev B; 191/PA515 Rev A; 191/PA515 Rev A; 191/PA516 Rev A; 191/PA517 Rev A; 191/PA518 Rev A; 191/PA519 Rev A; 191/PA520 Rev B; 191/PA521 Rev A; 191/PA522; 191/PA530; 191/PA532; 191/PA533; Heritage And Conservation Assessment; Structural Report; Environmental Report; Design And Access Statement; lifetime homes information; emails dated 31.1.07, 6.2.07 & 9.2.07 from agent; photomonatges			
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant Planning Permission with conditions			
Related Application	Conservation Area Consent		
Date of Application:	23/10/2006		
Application Number:	2006/4835/P		
Proposal: Partial demolition of ground and first floors of dwellinghouses and the erection of new ground and first floors to No.1 and No.2 Hill View (Class C3). Drawing numbers: Those listed above.			
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant Conservation Area Consent with conditions			
Applicant:		Agent:	
Roxanne & Ivan Harbour & Helen Pilkington		Toh Shimazaki Architecture	
1 & 2 Hillview		81 The Cut	
Makepeace Avenue		Waterloo	
London		London	
N6 6EU		SE1 8LL	

ANALYSIS INFORMATION

Land Use Details:			
	Use Class	Use Description	Floorspace

Existing	1 Hillview C3 Dwelling House	130.3m ²
	2 Hillview C3 Dwelling House	175.8m ²
Proposed	1 Hillview C3 Dwelling House	175.8m ²
	2 Hillview C3 Dwelling House	147.3m ²

Residential Use Details:										
	Residential Type	No. of Habitable Rooms per Unit								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9+
Existing	2 dwellingshouses					1	1			
Proposed	2 dwellingshouses					1	1			

Parking Details:		
	Parking Spaces (General)	Parking Spaces (Disabled)
Existing	4	0
Proposed	4	0

OFFICERS' REPORT

Reason for Referral to Committee: The proposal involves the substantial demolition of two buildings in a conservation area [Clause 3(v)].

1. SITE

- 1.1 The site comprises of a pair of semi detached buildings on the west side of Swains Lane, opposite the western perimeter wall to Highgate Cemetery. The site and its surroundings fall within the Holly Lodge Conservation Area which was designated in 1992, the boundaries of which are drawn tightly around the Holly Lodge Estate which was developed from 1923 to the plans of Mr Alderman Abraham Davis JP.
- 1.2 The buildings are slightly unusual as they are two storeys with attic space on the Swains Lane elevation (front), but only one storey with roof accommodation on rear elevation on account of the slope of the land. It is believed that the properties were originally constructed in 1927 as single storey garages with the remainder of their built form added over to include residential accommodation in the form of cottages in 1928. The rest of the estate was built about 5 years earlier. Two of the three garages at 2 Hillview are used for storage purposes independently of the residential use.
- 1.3 The draft Holly Lodge Conservation Area Statement (March 2002) describes the special character and appearance of the conservation area as being derived from its "...topography combined with the planned quality of the urban form." The main axial route Hillway rises steeply to the north before turning westwards to join Highgate West Hill. Three main parallel roads, Oakeshott, Makepeace and Langbourne Avenues bisect Hillway, with Bromwich Avenue to the south linking Hillway to Swains Lane, creating a grid of formal vistas and boulevards. The architectural style chosen for the estate reflected the renewed interest of the period

in vernacular and Tudor revival architecture and is characterised by its gables, hipped roofs, tiled roofscapes, roughtcast render and applied half timbering detail.

- 1.4 The original Davis scheme proposed predominantly two storey detached and semi-detached houses throughout the estate. The majority of the masterplan was realised and thus the majority of the conservation area comprises two storey buildings, with the exception of the proposed pairs of semi-detached houses on Makepeace, Oakeshott and Langbourne Avenues, which are now lined with five storey mansion blocks.
- 1.5 There are no listed buildings within close proximity of the site. Those closest are those contained within the Highgate Cemetary to the north of the site and those at Holly Village to the south of the site. These buildings lie well over 120m away from the site.

2. THE PROPOSAL

Original

- 2.1 The application is for the demolition and replacement of the existing properties at 1 & 2 Hillview. The proposal involves demolishing the upper two storeys of the houses back to their underlying form – a plinth of garages at lower ground floor level and re-using this as the base for the new construction. The houses will be semi-detached and comtemporary in form and are constructed of a structural timber frame with glazing and opaque cladding panels. The applicant has stated that the proposal is to deliver low carbon homes in which sustainability forms an integral part of the design.
- 2.2 The proposed houses will continue to provide for family accommodation. One of the garage spaces at 2 Hillview is to be lost, but the actual number of off-street parking spaces remains the same on account of courtyard space.

Revision

- 2.3 The proposal was revised to reduce the extent of glazing on the south elevation and to incorporate a level entrance to 1 Hillview to meet Lifetime Homes standards.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

At 1 & 2 Hillview:

- 3.1 30/08/2005 – (2005/2895/P and 2006/2459/P) Applications **withdrawn** for works to 1 & 2 Hillview and 1&2 Westview, comprising the erection of rear ground and lower ground two-storey extensions, new boundary walls and gates, new/enlarged dormer windows and rooflights (Swains Lane elevation); new/enlarged dormer windows to front elevation and patio doors in style of existing windows to 1&2 Hill View (front elevation) only.

At 1 Hillview:

- 3.2 13/12/2005 – (2005/4240/P) PP **granted** for the construction of new dormers at front and rear; rooflight at rear; new patio doors at front and new boundary wall and timber gates at rear of single-family dwellinghouse.

- 3.3 07/01/1988 – (8701208) PP **granted** for the conversion of two garages to provide additional residential accommodation including external alterations.
- 3.4 14/03/1990 – (9003013) PP **granted** for the change of use of garage to residential accommodation and alteration to front elevation.

At 2 Hillview:

- 3.5 13/12/2005 - (2005/4241/P) PP **granted** for the construction of new dormers at front and rear; addition of new side door at ground floor level; new patio doors at front; new rooflights at side and rear; replacement of garage doors and new boundary wall and timber gates at rear of single-family dwellinghouse.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Statutory Consultees

- 4.1 N/A.

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

- 4.2 **Holly Lodge CAAC object.** The proposed ultra modern buildings with their angled roof lines would represent unduly prominent and incongruous intrusions to the detriment of the streetscene and conservation area. They would be in stark contrast to the Arts and Crafts houses to the north and south in Swains Lane, the mock tudor mansion blocks and the Victorian Cemetary entrance to the north. The view from the gardens to the west of the site would be incongruous and jarring. There is no case for demolishing the existing buildings.
Response: See assessment.

Local Groups

- 4.3 **Holly Lodge Residents Association object.** A detailed 5 page submission has been submitted on behalf of the Residents Association. The objection details the history and architecture of the Holly Lodge garden suburb. They also put forward their own assessment of the proposal against the 'Unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas' tests which are contained within the English Heritage Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals. The findings of that assessment differ from those put forward by the applicant and have concluded that the building is a key element within the estate and contrasts well with its surroundings. The objection also states that the existing buildings are of great importance and that the loss of any element will weaken the planned whole of the Holly Lodge estate. The site should not be used for trendy architecture.
Response: See assessment.

Adjoining Occupiers

	Original
<i>Number of Letters sent</i>	38
<i>Number of responses Received</i>	105
<i>Number electronic</i>	29

<i>Number in Support</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Letters of 'comment'</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Number of Objections</i>	<i>99*</i>

- 4.4 A site notice was also displayed outside the site. *99 objections (which includes a 54 signatory petition) received on the following grounds.

Design

- the proposed development will significantly alter the character of the estate and the character of the immediate area to its detriment
Response: See assessment.
- the new buildings will change the character of our gardens forever, it will make them claustrophobic (from 246 Holly Lodge Mansions)
Response: Proposal unlikely to impact on the gardens of Holly Lodge Mansions.
- the current buildings match the style of the rest of the estate by being mock tudor buildings, the new design is entirely different and significantly larger than the cottages
Response: See assessment.
- the buildings are higher and out of scale
Response: Increase in height over existing is approx. 0.7m.
- the proposed buildings are located by guided walking tour routes used by visitors to historic Highgate
Response: It is considered that these buildings would represent acceptable replacements.
- the site is near the entrance to Waterlow Park and the Cemetery to the north and the proposals would ruin it
Response: No harm would be caused to the setting of either Waterlow Park or the Cemetery.
- the proposal is overdevelopment and over dense.
Response: No additional units are proposed, and no significant increase in floorspace or building footprint is proposed.
- the gated style development will result in a loss of openness
Response: Gates have already been approved (see history).
- proposal loses the York stone terraces and the relationship of the frontage of the cottages to the Makepeace flats gardens by adding decking
Response: The loss of the York stone terraces is regrettable but they will need to be removed to make way for the new scheme.
- the houses themselves will lose the low views from their living rooms across the flats gardens
Response: This view is not a protected view.
- loss of view to the red roof tiles of the existing houses
Response: This view is not a protected view.
- the drawings depict that 1 & 2 Westview will also look the same. I understand that they are not applying for similar consent so the two blocks will not look the same if consent is given
Response: Although it is only 1 & 2 Hillview that is applying for permission, 1 & 2 Westview (which lie adjacent to the application site) may submit similar applications, subject to the success of this application and finance permitting.

- Loss of mature trees

Response: No mature trees are to be lost; tree protection condition attached.

Residential amenity

- the new houses will overlook living rooms and bedrooms in a significant number of flats in Holly Lodge and Makepeace Mansions

Response: The proposal is not considered to worsen the existing situation. The terraces proposed will be screened and no significant increase in the amount of glazing to the flank elevations is proposed.

- materials and design will cause light pollution to adjacent flats

Response: No harm can be proven on light pollution grounds. Extent of glazing on south elevation has been reduced by revised drawings.

Other

- no attempt has been made to inform the residents or the Holly Lodge leaseholders of the development, hardly a proper consultation exercise

Response: A site notice was displayed and letters sent to 38 residents, including the closest Makepeace Mansions housing block.

- why was the site notice posted so late?

Response: It was erected on 10.11.06 which was the day after the neighbour letters were sent.

- check section 9 – they are nothing to do with ‘Hillview’... it should read ‘Swains Lane’

Response: The drawings are entitled ‘Hill View, Swains Lane’ rather than Hillview, Makepeace Avenue. This is a mistake but does not invalidate the application.

- noise and disruption works

Response: Non material planning objection.

- loss of residents access path from Makepeace Mansions past the cottages into our private communal gardens during building works

Response: Non material planning objection.

- concern that residents will use the private communal dwellings belonging to the mansions

Response: This could happen with the existing situation as no changes are proposed to the rear boundary treatment.

- proposal has been submitted for greed and commercial gain

Response: Non material planning objection.

- when will the work begin? What might the disruption to neighbours?

Response: It is not known exactly when the work might begin, if consent is granted, the applicant has three years to start the work. Neighbours may experience noise and disruption during daytime hours – subject to control under the Control of Pollution Act.

- Individual letters should have been sent to all houses in the mansion blocks

Response: Letters were sent to the residents in the closest mansion block (no's 235 – 269).

- There may be those that are unable to comment on the application e.g. elderly

Response: Noted.

- The proposal will restrict access to my garage as there is a pillar in the way; a front sliding gate has been proposed which is 1m longer in plan; a new wall to

the right of my space will also limit manoeuvrability; the drawing also shows gates being proposed to 1 West View and I have not been informed of this (from the owner of a garage under 2 Hillview and 1 West View)

Response: These are all issues which relate to the manoeuvrability of a vehicle into the garage space. The Council has no control over these issues. No gates are being proposed to 1 West View as part of this application.

5 letters of support received on the following grounds:

- support idea of a green roof and solar panels
- the houses are architecturally designed, contemporary, sustainable dwellings which will enhance the environment
- the existing designs have little aesthetic appeal and will add diversity and interest which will integrate with the existing environment well
- some of our neighbours have received a circular requested that neighbours object to the proposal in writing – we are being portrayed as developers rather than private householders who have lived here for many years
- represents a piece of imaginative architecture

5. POLICIES

Set out below are the UDP policies that the proposals have primarily been assessed against, together with officers' view as to whether or not each policy listed has been complied with. However it should be noted that recommendations are based on assessment of the proposals against the development plan taken as a whole together with other material considerations.

Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006

- 5.1 S1/S2 Sustainable development principles (complies)
SD1 Quality of life (complies)
SD2 Planning obligations (complies)
SD6 Amenity (complies)
SD7 Light, noise and vibration pollution (complies)
SD9 Resources and energy (complies)
H1 New housing (complies)
H7 Lifetime homes (complies)
B1 General design principles (complies)
B3 Alterations and extensions (complies)
B7 Conservation areas (complies)
B9 Views (complies)
T3 Pedestrians and cycling (complies)
T9 Impact of parking (complies)

Other Relevant Planning Policies

- 5.2 PPG 15 Planning and the historic environment
The London Plan
English Heritage Guidance 'Conservation Area Appraisals' 2005

English Heritage Guidance 'Conservation Area Practice' 1995

Supplementary Planning Guidance

5.3 Camden Planning Guidance 2006

Draft Holly Lodge Conservation Area Statement 1992

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 The principal considerations material to the determination of this application are summarised as follows:

- Acceptability of the demolition of the ground and first floors of the buildings and the design, form and bulk of the proposed buildings
- Impact on residential amenity
- Quality of accommodation
- Energy and sustainability
- Parking and transport issues
- Other issues

Acceptability of demolition of the ground and first floors of the buildings and the design of the proposed buildings

- 6.2 The existing buildings are three storeys in height and form a semi-detached pair. Immediately to the north are a further semi-detached pair (1 & 2 West View) that were originally constructed to the same design as the application properties. It is believed that the properties were originally constructed as single storey garages accessed off Swains Lane with the rest of their built form added after. The layout of the buildings is unusual in that the Swains Lane elevation consists of two storeys, whilst the rear elevation fronting the open space between Makepeace and Holly Lodge Mansions is only a single storey.
- 6.3 The Holly Lodge Conservation Area Statement makes only brief reference to the buildings, which fall within Sub Area 5, indicating that *"The small flats and maisonettes in Court View, Hill View and West View, on Swain's Lane form their own sub-areas, they have a lower scale than the adjoining mansion blocks. The design of the buildings reflects, in general terms, the module and form of the original mansion blocks."*
- 6.4 The Conservation Area Statement indicates that the Council consider that all of the buildings within the conservation area contribute to its character. English Heritage guidance *Conservation area appraisals (1997)* provides a framework for determining whether an unlisted building makes a positive contribution and a useful series of criteria. When assessed against these criteria, it is clear that 1 & 2 Hill View share the same broad architectural and aesthetic characteristics of other buildings within the Holly Lodge Conservation Area. Furthermore, given that they date from the original phase of development of the Holly Lodge Estate and are in residential use, they also share a historic and functional relationship. As such, they are considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 6.5 However, some buildings make a more significant contribution than others. In this case there are several persuasive reasons as to why the contribution of 1 & 2 Hill View is minimal. The orientation of the main face of the buildings away from Swains Lane and towards the open space to the west creates a physical and visual relationship with the adjacent mansion blocks but inevitably reduces the visual contribution of the buildings to the character and appearance of the conservation area because the main façade is not visible from the public realm. It is acknowledged that the existing buildings feature in the view eastwards across the open space between Holly Lodge Mansions and Makepeace Mansions. However, whilst this arrangement is established it does not appear as a planned townscape feature, particularly given that the remainder of the open space is enclosed by the rear elevations of the mansion blocks and houses on Hillway. Furthermore, given the modest height of the buildings and the trees and soft landscaping that obscure them even during the winter months, the significance of this particular vista is reduced within the overall context of the special character of the conservation area.
- 6.6 The English Heritage guidance is clear that whilst any one of their checklist criteria could provide the basis for concluding that a building makes a positive contribution this is “....*provided that its historic form and qualities have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration.*” The ‘front’ elevation of the building onto Swains Lane is undistinguished, consisting of garage doors at ground floor level with small casement windows above. The buildings have also been incrementally altered over time so as to enlarge the original extremely limited residential accommodation. This has resulted in an incongruous and uncoordinated appearance to the Swains Lane elevation, where the ground floor garages of 1 Hill View have had windows inserted to create habitable floorspace. Dormers and rooflights have been added to both roof slopes so as to facilitate further accommodation within the roof space. There is more aesthetic interest to the rear of the buildings which exhibit the gabled roof form and half timbering that characterises many other properties within the conservation area. Nonetheless, the buildings are inferior in architectural quality and significance to the larger villa properties that line Hillway and the streets that lead from it.

The proposal

- 6.7 The proposal is for the demolition of the existing buildings and their replacement with a pair of semi-detached contemporary residential dwellings. These are part two/part three storeys and are constructed of a structural timber frame with glazing and opaque cladding panels.
- 6.8 The key considerations in assessing this application are the demolition tests contained within section 3.19 of PPG 15. These are:
- i. the condition of the building, the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance and to the value derived from its continued use.
 - ii. the adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use.
 - iii. the merits of alternative proposals for the site

In addressing these tests there is clearly an overall balanced judgement to be reached regarding the condition of the existing buildings, the quality of the replacement scheme and the overall visual and aesthetic contribution associated with redevelopment of the site.

- 6.9 **i. Condition:** Over time the buildings have been altered and extended in a piecemeal manner so as to increase the available residential accommodation. The roof space of both buildings has been converted whilst at 1 Hill View the ground floor garages have also been incorporated as living space. These modifications have utilised basic parts of the building that were never intended for residential use (and which would require waterproofing and thermal upgrading) and have resulted in uncoordinated alterations that detract from the appearance of the building. Nonetheless, despite these alterations the internal arrangement of these buildings is cramped and illogical. Whilst the buildings are not about to fall down, the level of intervention has diminished the integrity of the structure. There is also extensive damp seepage through the rear, some cracked walls, movement of side walls, localised corrosion and build up of water pressure on the garage perimeter walls.
- 6.10 **ii. Adequacy of efforts to retain the building in use:** The buildings are currently in residential use and are in a habitable condition. The proposed buildings are also to be in residential use and will be occupied in the same manner as single family dwellings. Given the overwhelmingly residential use pattern of the conservation area, the continued residential use of this site is considered appropriate. Furthermore, the buildings were originally constructed as residences, albeit with ground floor garages which in the case of 1 Hill View have been converted to additional residential accommodation. The relevance of this criteria is limited as other uses would neither be desirable in this location nor compatible with the existing building.
- 6.11 **iii. The merits of alternative proposals for the site:** PPG 15 is clear that the merits of alternative proposals for the site are a material consideration, although subjective claims regarding the architectural merits of the proposed replacement buildings are not sufficient justification alone. However, in exercising conservation area controls, local planning authorities are required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area in question. As such, the contribution that the proposed buildings would make compared with the existing structures is a valid consideration.
- 6.12 English Heritage's document Conservation Area Practice (1995) s.8.3 is clear that *"A new building should be in harmony with, or complementary to, its neighbours, having regard to the pattern, rhythms, and details of the adjoining buildings, and especially their architectural style. The use of materials generally matching those which are historically dominant in the area is important, as is the need for the development not to have a visually disruptive impact on the existing townscape or street scene. It should also, as far as possible, fit into the 'grain' of an historic area, for example by respecting surviving medieval street patterns. All these aspects can be assessed to a large degree without reference to the architectural style adopted for the design, whether contemporary or historicist."*
- 6.13 The proposed buildings are undoubtedly bold and contemporary, yet are considered to be a high quality and responsive addition to the Holly Lodge Conservation Area which officers consider would enhance its character and appearance. The configuration of the proposed structures is similar to the existing buildings, representing only a small increase in bulk and footprint and is a

contemporary reworking of a traditional semi-detached pair. Rather than following the existing hipped roof form, the profile consists of pavilions and lower link structures. This arrangement is an echo of the detached houses on Hillway and provides rhythm and relief to the east and west elevations, whilst the pitched roof to the 'eco hat' responds to the small gables on the adjacent mansion blocks. The use of dark stained structural timber framing is innovative and follows the tradition of half timbered detailing which is found throughout the conservation area, albeit in a form that is integral to the construction of the buildings. This framework will be infilled with translucent and clear double-glazing and white opaque panels, with red cladding to part of the roof to reflect the traditional red clay tiles within the conservation area. Furthermore, the proposed buildings would be fully subordinate to the adjacent mansion blocks and would preserve the existing visual relationship in terms of their relative scale.

- 6.14 At pre-application stage concerns were raised regarding the proposed building line for the new dwellings. It was considered that the existing building line should not be breached so as to retain open views northwards along Swains Lane. However, following a second site visit and further consideration of the scheme, the proposed building line is considered acceptable. The new building line would project less than 3m beyond the existing building line and this increase would not be readily apparent given the absence of a consistent or readily appreciable building line along Swains Lane. The stepped building line would still also be maintained with the adjacent semi-detached pair, West View, albeit less pronounced. The proposed buildings would cause no harm to the setting of the listed Highgate Cemetery entrance nor to Waterlow Park which lie to the north of the site as the proposal is sufficiently distanced from them to be seen together in long views.
- 6.15 Concerns were also raised that given the broad architectural relationship that the buildings share with others within the conservation area, their demolition could set a precedent for the redevelopment of other sites. However, these buildings are of less architectural quality, significance and group value than the vast majority of other buildings within the conservation area. The existing buildings are sited on the extremities of the estate and have a limited physical relationship with the formal avenues and homogenous development that characterises the bulk of the conservation area. The agent has confirmed that if this application were successful then a second scheme would be submitted for the redevelopment of the adjacent properties at 1 & 2 West View. This would reintroduce a more pronounced stepped building line as well as redeveloping this small group in a comprehensive and coherent manner that would enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.16 Furthermore, there is an existing pattern of late 20th century and contemporary buildings on Swains Lane, albeit further north and set just within the boundaries of the adjacent Highgate Conservation Area. Some of these properties are considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area despite contrasting dramatically with the nearby 19th century neo-Gothic Highgate Cemetery buildings. These include the John Winter House (1969) at no.81, a flat roofed residence clad in corten steel and glass and no.85 which is currently under construction in a contemporary style.

- 6.17 Given the marginal visual quality of the existing buildings and the overall wider merits of the replacement scheme, the proposed demolition of the existing buildings is considered acceptable. The innovative design approach to the replacement dwellings is impressive and their architectural quality is a significant factor in informing this view. The use of structural timber framing is considered appropriate and the references to form and materials from within the wider conservation area is thoughtful and well considered. It is considered that the replacement buildings would improve the interface between the site and Swains Lane, establishing a front elevation to the public realm. Furthermore, the proposed buildings would fulfil the same function as the existing buildings in providing a visual 'stop' across the open space to the west of the site, albeit in this case with a contemporary elevational treatment.
- 6.18 Although the buildings are modern and contemporary in appearance, they are considered to be a welcome addition to the conservation area. The angled roof form reflects the angled appearance of the hipped roofs found on surrounding properties and thus the form of the buildings has been influenced by the existing streetscape. Although the height of the buildings is higher than the existing, there is no consistency in building height on Swains Lane. The height of the mansion blocks on Makepeace Avenue and Oakeshott Avenue to the north and south are considerably higher and therefore no objection is raised to the proposed height. The elevations are exciting and varied and the fenestration works well to produce lively and interesting frontages. The use of vertical timbers expresses an ascending order to the facades as they become slimmer on each upper floor. The remainder of the materials proposed (render, zinc clad roofs) have been chosen for their high quality and long life as they will weather and integrate well. Diagonal timbers on the rear elevation refer to features found on the existing buildings and those found on West View adjacent to the site. On this basis, this proposal would significantly improve the appearance of the site and be of greater than equal benefit to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Impact on residential amenity

- 6.19 The replacement buildings will be built with a slightly larger footprint at lower ground and ground floor levels and the proposed first floor of the buildings is approximately double the size of the existing first floor. The increase in height over the existing buildings is 0.7m (approx. 9.3m as existing at ridge height to 10m as proposed). As the existing and proposed distances to surrounding buildings are identical, the proposal will not give rise to a loss of daylight, sunlight or outlook to adjoining residential occupiers. The existing and proposed distances to Makepeace Mansions is 5.35m, and the existing and proposed distances to Holly Lodge Mansions to the north is 21m. Windows are proposed at oblique angles and therefore no loss of privacy will occur. No loss of outlook will occur for these same reasons. The closest residential buildings to the application site are at 1-2 West View and the proposed position and siting would not reduce the amenity for these occupiers.
- 6.20 Terraced areas are proposed at rear first floor level. These areas are small in size and are inset into the building's footprint at this level, ensuring that no overlooking from them will occur.

- 6.21 The proposal does propose a significant amount of glazing, but this does not result in any greater intensity of overlooking to surrounding properties, as most of the glazing is on the front and rear elevations which do not directly overlook residential properties. Furthermore, the extent of glazing on the south elevation which faces the flats within Makepeace Mansions has been reduced.
- 6.22 The proposal has incorporated external solar shutters and internal insulated night shutters to prevent the spillage of light pollution; this is welcomed and further details of these shutters will be requested by condition.
- 6.23 Concern has been raised as to the loss of views from the mansion blocks themselves. This relates more to the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area. These views are individual views and are not protected as being locally important views. Concern has also been raised as to the impact on the Holly Lodge gardens adjacent to the west of the site, but the proposal will not result in any additional overshadowing to these gardens because the proposed buildings do not extend further back than the existing rear building line and as the additional height is only 0.7m over the existing ridge height. Trees and vegetation will screen the long distance views from within these gardens but even in closer range views, the design and form of the houses are considered acceptable and would not impact upon or detract from the amenity value of that open space as the increase in height and bulk is not considered to be significant.

Quality of accommodation

- 6.24 The accommodation provided is considered to be of a superior quality to the existing accommodation which has been extended and altered in a piecemeal fashion. All habitable rooms will receive acceptable levels of daylight and outlook and the size of the dwellings and bedrooms meet SPG floorspace requirements.
- 6.25 Lifetime Homes: The proposal has been revised to incorporate level access to 1 Hillview as previously there were steps to this entrance. There is room to incorporate a stair lift if one is required in the future. Thus the proposal complies with lifetime homes standards and can be adapted later on if required.

Energy and sustainability

- 6.26 The retention and re-use of the lower ground floor garage plinth will reduce the new building's total lifecycle energy cost. The applicant has submitted an environmental report which states that the objective for the scheme is to deliver low carbon homes. This has been achieved by reducing energy demand by façade configuration so that the east and west elevations benefit from passive solar gains, incorporating solar shutters, solar panels on the 'ecohat' part of the buildings, sustainable timber and green roofs into the scheme. The applicant has also stated that a rainwater harvesting system will be incorporated into each of the houses for collecting rainwater which will be stored in a rainwater tank within the ground. This is considered to comply with the requirements of policies SD9 and B1.

Parking and transport issues

- 6.27 The proposal continues to provide two dwellings on the site and therefore no increase in traffic generation can be proven. No. 1 Hillview does not contain any existing garages and none are proposed though there is space for cars to be parked in the front courtyard. No. 2 Hillview contains three garages as existing, one of which is owned by the applicant and the other two are owned separately and are used for storage. The proposal is to reprovide two of these garages for continued use for storage purposes. The loss of the third garage is not objected to as there is still space to park a car in the front courtyard.
- 6.28 The dwellings are large enough to provide cycle storage space either within the grounds of the houses or internally. Similarly there is sufficient space for refuse storage.

Other issues

- 6.29 Impact on trees: No trees are to be lost as a result of the proposal although mature London Plane trees exist along the front (Swains Lane) elevation of the buildings. Planning permission was granted for new boundary walls to the buildings in December 2005 (see history) and a condition was attached to those consents to require the foundations to the walls to be built with bridging beams so as to avoid impacting on the roots of those trees. Nonetheless, a tree protection condition will be attached to the decision notice.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The quality of the existing buildings is considered to be marginal and on this basis, together with the merits of the replacement scheme, the demolition of the existing buildings is acceptable. The design approach is modern and innovative and embraces sustainable features such as solar panels, green roofs etc. The proposal will not detrimentally impact on residential amenity and the quality of accommodation provided is of superior quality when compared to the existing. Overall, it is considered that the proposal will improve the appearance of the site and its visual contribution to the Conservation Area.

8. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 8.1 Members are referred to the note from the Legal Division at the start of the Agenda.

- 9. RECOMMENDATION: Grant Planning Permission and Conservation Area Consent, both with conditions.**

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